

The Clere School

Earlstone Common, Burghclere, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 9HP

Unique reference number (URN): 116430

Monitoring inspection report:

24 March 2026

At the most recent graded inspection, the following areas were identified as needing to improve:

The school has not acted swiftly enough to rectify the deficiencies in the school or make the necessary improvements to ensure that good standards are maintained. The school's own policies and improvement priorities are not applied rigorously or consistently enough to secure rapid and sustainable improvements. The school must focus its actions on those aspects that are most in need of improvement and rapidly rectify the shortcomings identified by this inspection.

The school has not ensured that pupils have confidence in how the school addresses bullying. As a result, pupils often do not report incidents of bullying for fear that the school will not take effective action. The school must ensure that bullying concerns are taken seriously and dealt with effectively, so that pupils regain confidence in the school's anti-bullying policy.

Many pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are often absent from school. The number of pupils who are persistently absent remains worryingly high, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The rate of suspensions is high and not reducing. Too many pupils, therefore, miss vital learning and are at risk of falling even further behind. The school must ensure that it takes robust action so that attendance improves rapidly, persistent absence decreases and the rate of suspensions reduces.

The teaching of the curriculum is too variable. Furthermore, teachers' checks on pupils' learning do not enable them to know how well pupils learn the curriculum. Often, gaps in knowledge or misconceptions go unaddressed. The school should ensure that teachers accurately identify gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge and then seek to tackle these in their subsequent teaching.

The achievement of disadvantaged pupils, particularly those who receive free school meals, remains low. Staff do not adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils with SEND effectively enough. This means that disadvantaged pupils are not supported to build

knowledge and skills consistently well and do not attain the qualifications that they need to progress to their next stages of education, training or employment. The school should ensure that pupils consistently achieve high standards, and that teachers know how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND effectively.

Leaders and governors are taking effective action to improve the school, but continued work is needed to remove the requires significant improvement designation.

During this monitoring inspection, inspectors focused on the following evaluation areas:

- Leadership and governance
- Attendance and behaviour

Leadership and governance

Since the previous inspection, you have continued to consolidate and refine the changes that you had started to implement at that time. These are now having a positive impact and should be celebrated.

You have maintained an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. When considering necessary changes, you consider how the impact of these actions will be measured. Consequently, your school development is strategic and efficient. Staff welcome the clarity that you have brought. Staff and pupils now understand, and appreciate, the high ambition that you have for the school.

Staff and pupils value how you and your leadership team are visible and approachable. Staff are well supported and, as a result, are highly positive. They are proud to work at the school and their contributions to school improvement have been significant.

You recognise that there is still more to do. Pupils with SEND, and disadvantaged pupils, are still too frequently involved in poor behaviour. Furthermore, you acknowledge that while many pupils appreciate the positive changes that they see, some pupils have not regained full confidence in school systems and staff.

Safeguarding

At the previous graded inspection, safeguarding was evaluated as being effective.

Attendance and behaviour

You have been systematic in helping pupils and families to recognise the importance of regular school attendance. Furthermore, the support that you provide for pupils who find attending regularly more difficult is detailed and individualised. As a result, whole school attendance has risen steadily. Pupils now attend in line with, and sometimes more than, the national averages. You have been particularly successful in helping the most vulnerable pupils to attend more. You, rightly, recognise how those who have previously attended less

need additional help to catch up with their work. Staff are thoughtful about how best to achieve this, while ensuring pupils feel welcomed and valued at school.

You have been clear in your expectations of both pupils and staff in improving behaviour. Pupils now consider bullying to be rare, and that in-lesson behaviour is most often calm and settled. Both staff and pupils welcome, and celebrate, how much calmer the school has become. Your careful data analysis has helped you to highlight where any disruption remains. You are taking decisive action to reduce this further. However, you also recognise that pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils remain overrepresented in incidents of poor behaviour. You are committed to reducing this further. Additionally, you have listened, and have taken action, when pupils told you that a minority of others continue to use derogatory language. That said, this language is not yet completely eradicated.

Many pupils welcome and recognise the positive changes that you have made in the school. These include generally improved lesson behaviour, pupil's greater readiness to learn, and a significant lessening of concerns about bullying. While this is the case, many pupils have not yet fully recovered their trust in the school's systems and processes. As a result, some pupils remain less likely to report concerns or poor behaviour. This, in turn, undercuts the positive changes that you have made in the school. It has the potential to reduce the impact of the wide-ranging improvements that you have put in place. You, your leadership team, and the wider staff remain committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve, and in helping all pupils, and their families, to regain full confidence in their school.

Leaders and governors should continue to work to address the priorities for improvement identified in the last graded inspection report.

About this inspection

The inspector carried out this monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005, and it was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require significant improvement following the graded inspection that took place in January 2025.

The school's previous inspection and the first monitoring inspection were carried out under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) at that time. The renewed EIF took effect from 10 November 2025. The areas for improvement identified at the school's graded inspection and subsequent monitoring inspection have been cross-referenced to the relevant evaluation areas in the inspection toolkit for consideration on this monitoring inspection.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was not to determine grades for any of the evaluation areas set out in the school inspection toolkit. The purpose was to identify and report on the school's progress in addressing priorities for improvement since the school's previous inspection.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the head of school, other senior leaders, staff, governors and the local authority to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection.

Lead inspector

Ed Mather

His Majesty's Inspector

About this school**School capacity**

725

Number of pupils on roll

468

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